The use of pesticides is regulated by Ministry of Agriculture through the Central Insecticides Board. Production can be done only for those pesticides approved by the Registration Committee of this Board, after due consideration.

Postal staff quarters in Andhra Pradesh

31. SHRI PRABHAKAR RAO KALVALA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the districts in Andhra Pradesh where staff quarters for postal department are proposed to be constructed during 1989-90;

(b) whether such quarters will be constructed in Nalgonda District (A.P.) ;

(c) if so, whether land for their construction has been acquired in Nalgonda district (A.P.) ;

(d) if so, the locations thereof; and

(e) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO) : (a) Staff quarters are proposed to be constructed during 1989-90 in Nellore, Khammam, Guntur, East Godavari, West Godavari, Vishakhapatnam, Kurnool and Medak Districts.

(b) to (e) No, Sir. In Nalgonda District no site is at present available for construction of staff quarters. Sites are under acquisition. Staff quarters will be planned after the sites are available.

Production of push button telephones by I.T.I.

32. SHRI K. V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Telephone Industries (ITI) has commenced commercial production of electronic push button telephones; and

(b) what is the production capacity of I.T.I in this field?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The licenced capacity is 10·5 lakhs per annum. Production capacity is being set up progressively from 1989-90 onwards.

Hike in the MES of Petro-chemical Industries

33. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the rationale behind the recent hike in the MES (minimum economic size) of the Petrochemical Industry; and

(b) what steps are being taken by Government to prevent monopolies from dominating the industry as a result of the increased MES?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) and (b) No change in minimum economic sizes for petro-chemical industries has been made recently.

Power from gas based NTPC Units

34. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some northern state electricity boards are

reluctant to draw power from gas based NTPC units;

(b) if so, what is the impact on NTPC; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to over come this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI KALPNATH RAI): (a) to (c) Of the three gas turbine units commissioned so far by the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), two units are under trial operation. The generation at the power stations of the NTPC is regulated by the Regional Electricity Boards who coordinate the overall operations of the regional power grids.

Optimum utilisation of limited resources in Andhra Pradesh

35. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether NTPC is adopting "Optimum utilisation of Limited resources" principle in power generation;

(b) If so, what steps are taken to exploit the gas and coal resources in Andhra Pradesh for power generation; and

(c) what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI KALPNATH RAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The national Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) are executing the Ramagundam Super Thermal Power project (ultimate capacity 2100MW) in Andhra Pradesh based on supply of coal from the Singareni collieries. The Corporation have been advised to prepare a Feasibility Report in respect of a gas-based power project near Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh for exploiting the gas available in the Krishna-Godavari basin.

Removal of subsidies on pesticides

36. SHRI SHAMIM HASHMI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have clamped 105 per cent Customs duty on 3 pesticides as reported in the Economic Times of 7th March, 1989 and if so, what are the details thereof and rationale behind this;

(b) whether this is in accordance with a general call for phasing out of pesticides and removal of various subsidies on pesticides given by recent National 2-day Core-Group meeting of Scientists and Consumer Groups held at New Delhi; and

(c) whether Government will phase out pesticides in due course and invest heavily on safe alternatives to pesticides?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO) : (a) The custom duty on 3 pesticides viz Monocrtophos, Methyl Parathion and Butachlor was raised to 105%. The rationale behind this increase is the indigenous availability position of these pesticides and to discourage unnecessary imports.

(b) and (c) Phasing out of pesticides is considered by the Registration Committee set up under the Insecticides Act in the Ministry of Agriculture. The above three pesticides have not been identified for being phased out. The duty increase has no relationship with the question of phasing out of these or any other pesticides.

National Council for Cement and Building Materials

37. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Council for Cement and Building Materials is a public financed institution and